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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
8 April 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

CEYLON
(Situation as of 1300 EST)

SUPPLEMENT

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1.

A CEYLONESE OFFICIAL, ACTING ON BEHALF OF PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE, HAS REQUESTED US ASSISTANCE IN GETTING SIX HELICOPTERS AND SPARE PARTS WITHIN AT LEAST THE NEXT 10 DAYS.

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2. THE CEYLONESE OFFICIAL SAID THE PRIME MINISTER VIEWED THE SITUATION AS "DESPERATE." HE DESCRIBED THE UPRISING AS A "FULL-BLOWN INSURGENCY MOVEMENT OF THE CLASSIC PATTERN AS SEEN ELSEWHERE IN THIS GENERAL AREA--MALAYSIA FOR INSTANCE." THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT THE REBELS HAVE BEEN PREPARING SINCE 1968 AND HE ESTIMATES THE STRENGTH OF THE INSURGENTS TO BE BETWEEN 10,000 TO 20,000. THE GOVERNMENT IS CONVINCED THAT THE INSURGENTS HAVE SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF RIFLES AND AUTOMATIC WEAPONS AND HAVE GAINED SUBSTANTIAL POPULAR SUPPORT. THE CEYLONESE OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE REBELLION CANNOT BE CONTROLLED WITHIN THE NEXT 10 DAYS, BUT THAT THE INSURGENTS MUST BE STOPPED "BEFORE THEY GET GOOD."

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3. BRITISH OFFICIALS,

ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION AND WANT TO DO ALL THEY CAN TO HELP. THE CEYLONESE HAVE ALSO REQUESTED HELICOPTERS, CAPABLE OF AIRBORNE ASSAULT, FROM THE UK. THE BRITISH, HOWEVER, SAY THAT "PRACTICAL PROBLEMS" MAKE IT UNLIKELY THAT THESE CAN BE PROVIDED. NONE IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE THROUGH BRITISH COMMERCIAL CHANNELS.

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State Dept. review
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4. PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN TO BRITISH OFFICIALS ABOUT THE SAFETY OF TWO OF HER CHILDREN WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT THE CEYLONESE INSURGENTS HAVE AGENTS THERE; SOME INSURGENT PROPAGANDA IS PRESUMED TO HAVE BEEN PRODUCED IN BRITAIN. SCOTLAND YARD IS PROVIDING PROTECTION FOR THE CHILDREN--WHO ARE IN THEIR TWENTIES.

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